



Stewarding the Land for Future Generations  
Local, Sustainable, Organic

# Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

October 5th, 2006- Week 18

## Featured Vegetable of the Week: Parsnips

The parsnip is a deliciously impressive performer in the fall, winter, and spring kitchens. Famous chefs reveal that it is easily prepared for diverse roles when brought to the table as an appetizer, soup, salad, or side dish. Parsnip's flavor is sweet and delicate, while its texture is smooth and light. Because of its starchy nature, the parsnip can easily stand-in for potatoes in meal planning.

Parsnip is a root vegetable and a member of the umbelliferae family whose other members include carrots, chervil, parsley, fennel, celery, and celeriac. The parsnip is unfamiliar to many Americans, yet it has been cultivated since Roman times. During the Middle Ages, farmers developed tastier and fleshier varieties. A variety of wild parsnip grew over much of Central and Southern Europe and was then introduced into the British Isles and Northern Europe, but the cultivated varieties are sweeter and more plump.

Because they store so well above ground as well as underground, parsnips are available year round. However, to enjoy the best of their flavors, the optimal season is fall through spring. Farmers plant the tiny seeds in the spring. Then the crop requires a patient three or four months to mature. Farmers have found that leaving the parsnips in the ground until late fall allows their starches to turn to sugars. Some farmers even leave the parsnips in the ground all winter with the belief that these produce the sweetest crop.

Folklore about the root centers around parsnip's ideal harvesting times. One myth says parsnips left in the ground over winter are poisonous. Another says that harvesting parsnips before the first frost causes them to be poisonous. Neither is true, of course, but folklore makes good conversation. The water hemlock, also a member of the same botanical family, looks very much like the wild parsnip, and is poisonous.

Nutritionally, parsnips are rich in fiber, folic acid, calcium and potassium, with lesser amounts of vitamins B1, B2, B3, vitamin C, iron, and zinc. Parsnips are easy to prepare. Here are some suggestions:

**RAW:** Peel a parsnip, shred it, and add it to a salad. Its flavor is very mild and you'll be adding nutritional benefits to your salad.

### **STEAMED, BOILED, BRAISED:**

Peel and thickly slice parsnips for adding to long-cooking bean or grain stews. To steam, slice and steam in a small amount of water for 10 to 12 minutes to use as a side dish.

### **SAUTEED:**

Peel and shred parsnips. Saute in a wok or skillet with a small amount of olive oil and a little water until tender, about 7 to 10 minutes. Dice peeled parsnips and carrots, and saute in a skillet with a little olive oil and water. Add a little lemon juice, wine, and seasonings and enjoy a tasty side dish.

### **ROASTED:**

Peel parsnips and slice in half lengthwise. Toss in a little olive oil and spread out on a lightly oiled baking pan. Roast in a 400 oven for 25 to 35 minutes, turning frequently to avoid sticking and burning. Season if desired.

## Ask the Farmers...

CSA member Amy Johnson asks, "What do you do in your free time?"



Mookie Moss  
Boones Farm

Spare time? What's that? On our farm, spare time is a luxury we can't always afford during the season. Our spare time comes in blocks after the goats are dry and the garden is cover cropped. This year, the winter will hopefully be filled with some traveling down south, maybe a little tequila, coupled with some geo-political rabble rousing. We do squeeze in some fairly competitive prideful ping-pong on the farm when we can steal away a few moments. Its essential to learn how to play while we work, farming is a tough trade, laughter is the best anecdote for burn-out.

In my free time, I like to play lots of music and sing. I particularly like to play traditional, old-timey music on the guitar and banjo. This past spring, Tom, Maud, Daniel and I started a band called the Donner Party Revival. During the hottest days of summer, we would play together during siesta time.



Eden Luz  
Quartz Creek Farm

In my free time, I like to make ice cream, practice yoga and dance. My favorite kind of ice cream to make is chocolate coffee. I also like to make herbal medicines.

I love to go backpacking in wilderness ares. I also love to go birding and hang out with my friends.



Daniel Wyatt  
Wolf Gulch Farm

I really enjoy biking, so when I have a chunk of free time, I usually plan a bike tour. I also enjoy making herbal medicine and spending time in the woods identifying plants.

I like to process food, cook and meditate during my free time.



Maud Powell  
Wolf Gulch Farm

It's been so fun to play my mandolin again with our little farm band this summer. I also enjoy hiking and running and have run three marathons in the past five years. I don't read as many books as I did before having kids, but I do love to curl up in bed with a cup of tea and the New Yorker.



Trever Jones  
Wolf Gulch Farm



Stu O'Neill  
Boones Farm



Ryan Ginn  
Quartz Creek Farm